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## **STATE'S MAPPING SYSTEM, MassGIS, CARTS OFF NATIONAL AWARD FOR 'EXEMPLARY SYSTEMS IN GOVERNMENT'**

The Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) recently announced that MassGIS, the state's mapping program located in the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), has won the Exemplary Systems in Government award in the Enterprise category for its Web Mapping Services.

"The URISA award may put MassGIS on the map nationwide, but those of us within the environmental agencies in Massachusetts have known for many years that MassGIS provides an essential tool for assessing and protecting our natural resources," said EOE Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard. "It's also been instrumental as an enforcement tool, and helped us to weed out those who in the past were able to fill wetlands with impunity."

According to URISA, this award is for systems that are *"outstanding, working examples of using information systems technology in a multi-department environment as part of an integrated process. These systems exemplify effective use of technology yielding widespread improvements in the process(es) and/or service(s) involved and/or cost savings to the organization."*

"MassGIS provides access to a wealth of high quality mapping data, and we are thrilled to share this capability through an open interface with any Massachusetts public agency – including cities or towns – that want to incorporate mapping into their own web site," said Christian Jacqz, director for the Office of Geographic and Environmental Information.

Jacqz added that previously, mapping services were available and distributed through CDs or by tedious download. Now, through the open interface, hundreds of data layers and symbolizations can be used in any public agency web site. In addition, the web mapping

services enabled the creation of the general purpose data viewing and downloading application OLIVER (**OnLine ViewER**) that provides mixing and matching of layers.

State and local government agencies can use the services to augment their existing web mapping capabilities by adding GIS data such as the statewide aerial photo images. Because the web mapping services are based on an open, published standard, the agency's own data layers can be combined with MassGIS layers even though they are in different physical locations.

This approach leverages investments in data, hardware, software, and skills at MassGIS and solves many problems of existing state agency web-based interactions with the public. Agencies that have not previously served maps can do so without having to build or maintain the supporting infrastructure. Further, agencies can collect location-based information from their constituencies, such as the locations of spills, facility information or biodiversity information.

The services are “inter”-operable, which means that map data from different sources can be combined in a single application. Fourteen different Massachusetts government entities have developed web applications that use the MassGIS Web Mapping Services. A sample of some of these can be found at

[http://www.mass.gov/mgis/mapping.htm#browser\\_apps](http://www.mass.gov/mgis/mapping.htm#browser_apps)

Further example of MassGIS growing popularity is the increase in requests for its services (73% increase in 2005):

- From January 1 to May 22, 2005: a total of 595,648 requests were logged, an average of 4,247 per day.
- The previous five-month period (August 2004 - December 2004) a total of 372,576 requests were logged, or an average of 2,451 per day.

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